

**Amendments to the Claims:**

*This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:*

1 through 20. (canceled)

21. (new) A method for generating a configuration record for a network device, the method comprising the steps of:

obtaining capability-configuration data for the network device, the capability-configuration data including substantially all commands that can be used to configure the network device;

obtaining actual-configuration data for the network device, wherein the actual-configuration data corresponds to at least a subset of the capability-configuration data; and

merging the capability-configuration data and the actual-configuration data into a configuration record for the network device;

wherein the configuration record is usable to configure and manage the network device.

22. (new) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

storing the merged capability-configuration data and the actual-configuration data in a central repository of configuration records.

23. (new) The method of claim 21, wherein obtaining the actual-configuration data for the network device comprises:

retrieving the actual-configuration data directly from the network device.

24. (new) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

storing in a storage location substantially all commands capable of configuring the network device; and

including a pointer in the configuration record that points to the storage location.

25. (new) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

storing a prior version of the actual-configuration data; and

including a pointer in the configuration data to the prior version of the actual-configuration data.

26. (new) The method of claim 21, further comprising:

storing in the configuration record substantially all commands capable of configuring the network device.

27. (new) A method for generating a configuration record for a network device, the method comprising the steps of:

retrieving first configuration data for the network device, the first configuration data indicating substantially all of the capabilities of the network device;

retrieving second configuration for the network device, the second configuration data including substantially all of the information about how the network device is currently configured to operate;

generating the configuration record by combining the first configuration data and the second configuration data into a configuration record for the network device; and

storing the configuration record in a repository of configuration records.

28. (new) The method of claim 27, wherein the first configuration data includes commands not corresponding to the current configuration of the network device.

29. (new) The method of claim 28, wherein the first configuration data includes CIM data.

30. (new) A method for generating a configuration record for a network device, the method comprising:

merging capability-configuration data and actual-configuration data for the network device; and

storing the merged capability-configuration data and actual-configuration data in a repository of configuration records that is remotely located from the network device, the configuration record being associated with the network device;

wherein the capability-configuration data indicates substantially all of the capabilities of the network device and wherein the actual-configuration data corresponds to at least a subset of the capability-configuration data.

31. (new) The method of claim 30, storing the merged capability-configuration data comprises:

storing a pointer to the capability-configuration data in the configuration record.